

President is draining the swamp. He is actually digging deeper into it. I really thank them for being an accountability wing here in the first branch mentioned in the Constitution—the legislative branch. I congratulate both of them. It has been a great privilege to join them this evening.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative KAPTUR and everybody that has participated tonight.

I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1830

#### ISSUES OF THE DAY AND REFLECTING BACK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, in our Judiciary Committee today, we have been marking up what should have been a couple of rather simple bills, but it is really as if the instructions on the Soros-funded website, manual, things telling people how to obstruct the current majorities in the House and Senate and administration, could possibly be carrying over here into the Capitol itself because there are so many amendments being offered and things being drug out and people saying the same thing over and over. It is about Russia and corruption and one thing and the other—on and on and on.

It is just interesting when people are talking about their dramatic concerns over Russia, who, for years, have been totally silent. When everybody I know of on the Republican side here had been asking that President Obama and his administration do something about the terrible hacking problem from Russia, China, North Korea, Iran, he didn't seem terribly bothered.

I mean, it was as if he were afraid he might hurt Putin's feelings or Khamenei's feelings in Iran and maybe they would want to kill Americans in a more brutal way, the Iran terrorists being paid. I can't help but think that there will be people in the next 4 years who are Americans, who are Muslim, Jews, Christians—especially those groups—who would be killed because of the billions and billions of dollars that this administration forced into the hands of the largest supporter of terrorism in the world: Iran.

It was as if the world—and in particular, the United States—had not been punished enough for the mistakes of the Carter administration in thinking that by pushing the Shah of Iran—not a great man. Apparently, he could be pretty brutal in his own right, but he kept radical Islam at bay.

When President Carter encouraged his forcing out of office, much as President Obama did the same thing with the President of Egypt, in both cases, it created a vacuum that was immediately filled by radical Islamists. The

Muslim Brotherhood is who filled it in Egypt. In Iran, yes, it was radical Islamists. And probably for the first time since the Ottoman Empire, radical Islamist leaders were given a country, a country's military with which to wreak their havoc on the world.

It is just hard to believe that, in the intervening years between President Carter leaving office in January 1981 and President Obama coming in in January of 2009, all history had been forgotten or possibly even not really learned.

I guess, if you are learning at the hands or at the feet of Jeremiah Wright, who has such contempt—GD America was his feelings and expression—or if you are at the feet of Bill Ayers, who felt that blowing up police stations, things like that, hadn't quite served the purpose, or perhaps if we take over educating college students who will one day train elementary students and high school students, then we can ultimately create the anarchy that we were trying to create in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Back then, we were unsuccessful, but great inroads have been made here recently. You would just have to believe that America was the problem for the world in the last 100 years, and apparently there are those who feel that way.

But for those of you who have talked with friends of different religions—Muslim, Christians, Jews, secularists—in different parts of the world, those who are actually fair minded make it very clear: the United States has been the greatest force for good as a nation that the world has ever known since the Dark Ages. It just has.

And thank God we have had such wonderful allies in the endeavors that we have undertaken. Of course, in the liberation of Kuwait from Saddam Hussein's hands, we had many other countries who joined us. President George H.W. Bush was going to liberate Iraq. So many Democrats had screamed at President George H.W. Bush as troops were moving into Iraq after the liberation of Kuwait, screaming: Stop, stop, stop. They are giving up. They are giving up.

President George H.W. Bush ordered the stoppage, and immediately thereafter, the Democrats that screamed for him to stop began berating Bush because he didn't finish the job in Iraq. Some of those same people were around to condemn his son George W. Bush when he actually did finish the job.

There was yellowcake uranium that was taken out which showed that Joseph Wilson had apparently said one thing to CIA agents and testified to something totally different, who said something totally different from his original interview when he got back from Africa. Of course, he was heralded a hero by the mainstream media.

But it has just been amazing to see the ebb and flow of international relations. And reflecting back as I did earlier today, as so much from my Democratic friends in Judiciary was made

about connections between the Trump administration and Russia, it is just hard not to remember so vividly the comments by Mitt Romney in a debate with President Obama in 2012 that Russia was potentially the greatest threat.

I may be mistaken, but it seems like President Obama even said something glibly like, you know, "The 1980s called and they want their foreign policy back," something rather cheeky like that, when, actually, my friends across the aisle, in Judiciary at least, have come to realize that that was one thing Mitt Romney was right about and President Obama was wrong about.

But if you look at what the Obama administration did, as soon as President Obama took office, instead of taking a principle stand—and I know there was a lot of perceived hatred by those coming in with the Obama administration for George W. Bush. Perhaps it goes back to President Obama's days when he was growing up in Indonesia and he commented in his book, "Dreams from My Father," about how his stepfather was apparently paid off by these fat-cat guys from Texas, oil guys, fat cats from Texas and Louisiana, something to that effect, and you realized, holy smokes, he has had a great disdain for Texas, for Louisiana going back to, you know, preteen years. You couldn't help but wonder if, in policies, it was carried through. Of course, he didn't appreciate his stepfather for working, and working with the Americans back in those days. But perhaps that has affected him.

So if George W. Bush took a principled stand against Russia after Russia assaulted the independent nation of Georgia—I mean, some of us remember that President George W. Bush, trying to look for the good in people, came back from meeting Putin and said, you know: I looked into his eyes and saw his soul. He thought that is what he saw—may have been looking into shark eyes. But in any event, he soon learned the error of his ways. And that is one of the things I liked about President George W. Bush. If he made a mistake, he was big enough to say that wasn't the right way to go, and he would try to fix it.

That is exactly what he did in his relationship with Russia. When Russia attacked Georgia—unprovoked, really—President George W. Bush, his administration, properly took a very principled stand. Some didn't think it went far enough, but he immediately caused a cessation of the great relations that had been going on and took some steps to chill those relations because of Russia's unilateral attack against Georgia, hoping to wake Putin up that you can't just go attack a neighboring country like that. Even if you want the old Soviet Empire back, you can't just do that without repercussions. So because of Putin's imperialistic attack, Bush took a strong stance and let Russia know: We don't approve of what you have done, and we are cooling things, we are freezing things.

One of the first things that occurred after President Obama took office, he sent his new Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, to meet with the Russians and they had this red plastic button—looked pretty cheap, but it was supposed to have said “reset,” but apparently, they couldn’t get the translation right. I am not sure what it said, peregruzka. I don’t know what it said. I don’t know what it was. But somebody that didn’t know how to translate “reset” put it on and delivered the wrong message.

But the more important message that Secretary Clinton and President Obama delivered to the rather ruthless imperialist leader of Russia was this: George W. Bush overreacted when you attacked your neighbor, Georgia, Mr. Putin, and we want you to know, we don’t have a problem with you attacking Georgia, attacking your neighbors, trying to take over their territory. So we are here with big smiles and big laughs because we want to be such a good friend of yours, and we think it is perfectly fine what you are doing. We think you are terrific.

□ 1845

That is the message after Bush let Putin know: Wait a minute. We are not going to let you be the big bully in the world. Enough.

But the Obama administration sent a very clear message: We are not Bush. We don’t have a problem with you attacking Georgia.

And it is hard to think anything but that message that Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, as our President, sent to Putin was clear: We would be okay if you attacked Ukraine, Crimea. You know, we are okay with that. If it is adjoining, yeah, yeah, attack away.

What else is Putin supposed to think when President Bush reacts harshly when he attacks a neighboring country, and the new President comes in and says: We are fine with everything you are doing. We are nothing but smiles and plastic red buttons. We are good. We don’t mind anything you have done. We want to be your good friend.

If the message from that was not clear enough, before he was reelected in 2012, a microphone he didn’t realize could pick him up, picked up our President telling the President of Russia: Basically tell Vladimir I will have a lot more flexibility after the election.

Well, now that could only have one meaning, and that is, I got to look tough and like I am standing up tough to Putin right now before the 2012 election, but make sure Putin knows that after the election I can give the farm a whole lot easier. I can let him do a whole lot more than he wants to do. We can be a lot more chummy once I get past my second and last election as President. So you make sure Vlad knows—my bosom buddy over there, my best friend forever—I am going to be able to work with him like he wants me to once I get past the next election.

So with those kind of messages, then, as if it wasn’t enough, followed up by

another message to Russia and the world when he stated that, basically, if President al-Assad in Syria used gas on people in Syria, that would be a red line. And if he crossed it, obviously we would have to do something. He created a red line. Nobody asked him to.

Putin picks up messages like that. For all of the problems he presents, one problem he does not present is where he stands, where he wants to go, and what motivates him. He’s very clear.

I have never met the man, but I have studied enough about Russia, and I have learned enough about Putin to know exactly who he is, what he is capable of, what he wants to do. And it is pretty clear: He wants to rebuild his empire. He hates the United States. He blames the United States for the fall of the glorious Soviet Union, that great USSR that once ruled the waves and the world. He wants a grand return to those days, and he wants to be the leader like Khrushchev or Brezhnev. Really, he would rather be in the nature of Stalin.

As Stalin himself once said, a translation: With power, dizziness. Stalin said that, and he should certainly know.

I think probably Putin has run into that as he has gotten all this glamour. During the Obama years, so many magazines and journalists just couldn’t get enough of Putin with his shirt off. I mean, it may have helped the sex status of—as the status symbol of people who were bald. Maybe I should be proud and happy for that, but it didn’t seem to affect me at all.

But there was so much laid on the shoulders—the mantle laid by the Obama administration on the shoulders of Putin. And when that didn’t seem to work out very well, it looked like the next big step was to ingratiate this Nation’s Presidency, administration to the most evil leaders in the world, those who are leading Iran.

They can be an evil empire all by themselves. They have wreaked so much havoc in the world. So many of the Americans that died liberating Iraq, lost their lives at the hands of IEDs or other weapons of war inflicted on them by Iranians—are sent to Iraq from Iran.

There is a big price to pay for mistakes in judgment of Presidents.

I believe Donald Trump will ultimately end up being one of the greatest Presidents in foreign relations because I think he is going to figure out, as George W. Bush did, Putin is not someone you can trust. You need to understand where he is coming from and where he wants to go. And you can use him when it is to our advantage against a common enemy. But make no mistake, he would glory in the fall of the United States.

He is wrong about why the Soviet Union fell. It fell because it was based on communism, totalitarianism, and it was destined to fall.

I could see that during the summer that I was there as an exchange stu-

dent, and I went out to a collective farm. And being from East Texas, I worked on farms and ranches. And during summer, as this was sometime in July, I went out to a collective farm there; and there were massive acres, huge numbers of acres out there.

I couldn’t really tell what was being cultivated and what wasn’t, what even the crop was. It didn’t look good. It was brown. I couldn’t get over how sad things looked out there. This was down in the Ukraine, the bread basket of what was the Soviet Union at the time.

I know that if you are going to work around the latitude that that was in Ukraine—similar to ours back in Texas—in the summer, you best start around sun up so that you don’t have to work when the Sun reaches its hottest time in the day.

Seeing all of the farmers gathered in the shade there near the center of the village—a little town they had there—they were all sitting in the shade mid-morning. I tried to use my best Russian that I could speak at the time and asked them, tried to use a smile: You know, when do you work out in the field?

They laughed. I thought, well, maybe I messed up a word and made it into a weird translation.

Then one of them spoke up in Russian, and he said: I make the same number of rubles if I am out there in the field or if I am here in the shade—if I am out there in the Sun or here in the shade, so I am here in the shade.

I thought at the time that is why socialism, communism could never work. If you are going to pay people the same thing not to work as you do the people who are working, then eventually most people are not going to work.

It is a good thing to have a safety net for those who, through no fault of their own, find themselves unemployed; but you can’t turn into a Socialist nation where you reward people—provide the safety net, sure—but you can’t provide incentives to sit in the shade and not work at all. Because eventually some day, your people will go hungry and your nation will fail as a nation-state, and it did. There were many factors that contributed, but the bottom line is that type of system can never work in this world, in this life.

The Pilgrims tried it in that beautiful Mayflower Compact where they were all going to work and bring into the common storehouse and share. It was just a beautiful, lovely way to approach things.

I have loved looking, as I did last night, at the painting there in the rotunda reflecting the Pilgrims’ famous prayer meeting there in Holland. It says “Speedwell” right under the platform where they were. They were on the ship, the *Speedwell*, before they left in two ships—the big *Speedwell* and the small *Mayflower*—and went over to England.

The *Speedwell*, the big ship that was going to allow them to take so many more to the new land, America, began

taking on water, for whatever reason. There were different things said about what may have been the cause.

But for whatever reason, they had to do a bit like Gideon did. They had to winnow it down to the people that had the best chance of making it to America so they could fit on that small *Mayflower*. So they winnowed the group down. They came over on the *Mayflower*.

It was a beautiful thing, loving, working hard as they did. But when such a huge number of their settlers died during that first winter, basically, the short version, they ultimately tried something new resembling private property: You take your property. You grow. You use it however you want. And whatever you grow and produce, that is yours.

It's amazing that worked out so well. Unlike the collective farms in the Soviet Union, there was incentive to work hard, produce, and people thrived, did so well. That actually gave a lot of incentive to others. Hey, this private property thing can work out well.

Here, all these years later, we have people wanting to go back to that way of life that has failed every time it has been tried. Even when the Apostle Paul tried it, he ultimately had to throw up his hands and say: Okay. New rule. If you don't work, you don't eat.

Because the socialist way of doing things in this world is not going to work.

I am glad that my friends who were so vocal about not wanting a strong relationship with the current leader of Russia, I am glad they finally realized what those of us on the Republican side—most of us—have been saying for a very long time. Yeah, we can work with the Russians to defeat our common enemy, but you should never lose sight of the fact Putin does not really want us for friends. He wants to see this country gone. He wants to see our way of life fail. So just don't lose sight of that.

It is also interesting—we had amendments being proposed today with the same theme being repeated constantly about a Muslim ban, in essence, that we should not ever take religion into account when it comes to immigration. That has no place.

Yet, when our chairman, one of our other Members brought up the—I believe it was RAÚL LABRADOR—the Lautenberg amendment that so many of us support, when you know a group of people—such as the Jewish people in another part of the world—are being killed and they are being persecuted, when we know that is taking place, it is a good thing to consider who they are and that their religion is being persecuted.

When there are Christians in another part of the world being persecuted beyond what other religions are, it is a good thing to try to help them.

□ 1900

When there were Muslims being persecuted in Eastern Europe, the Clinton

administration responded, came to their aid. And for those that say, gee, standing up to radical Islam will only encourage more recruitment—my word—how much worse can it get than it has gotten during the last 8 years?

There was no ISIS. President Obama took office, Afghanistan, they were still fighting; but actually, the Taliban had been totally—any organized Taliban had been destroyed by February of 2002, and we hadn't lost a single American life. We had used—we had let the Northern Alliance, residents, citizens in Afghanistan, we let them fight our enemy because, though they were Muslim, most of them, they didn't want radical Islamists running Afghanistan.

A mistake was made after our friends in the Northern Alliance totally routed the Taliban. We sent in tens of thousands of American troops, and our friends, who loved us and heralded us for our liberation from the Taliban in Afghanistan, began to look at us as occupiers. I have been to Afghanistan enough. I have seen the way that relationship has gone, from us being the heroes that liberated their country from these radical Islamists that were a bane to the existence of just peace-loving Muslims wanting to live and not be terrorized by radical Islamists, and somehow we ended up becoming bad guys to so much of the country because of our massive presence.

I do believe, Mr. Speaker, there is potential with all of the chaos that is beginning to raise its head again in Afghanistan. I heard a report this morning that Afghans had confided to a Republican here in town when he was over there visiting that al-Qaida is even back in Afghanistan. So it is not just the Taliban back stronger than ever; now al-Qaida is back in Afghanistan.

And what was the cost to America, to our military over the last 8 years in allowing the Taliban to come back stronger than they were originally, to al-Qaida, to come back in Afghanistan stronger than they were originally? My personal opinion, I believe it was because of President Obama's rules of engagement. But we lost four times more precious military lives in Afghanistan during President Obama's command than were lost during just under 8 years under Commander George W. Bush.

How could we lose four times more American military and suffer such a setback over the last 8 years, where we are back maybe a little worse off than things were when we went in to Afghanistan in October of 2001? Well, it has to do with the commitment. I heard former Vice President Cheney say that when President Obama announced he is committed to Afghanistan and he sent a surge into Afghanistan, he also announced, what seemed almost simultaneously, and we are going to be out in 18 months.

As we know from history, nobody that ever won a war, a police action, a

confrontation, ever set a deadline: We are going to win by this date or we are coming out, whether we have won or not. That message went out loud and clear to the Taliban that was growing back that if we can just hang on for 18 months, we will own Afghanistan all over again.

I understand that, apparently, General Harwood, that has apparently been named by President Trump as the new National Security Adviser—and Mr. Speaker, I am sorry. I have got to say this because of what Billy and Karen Vaughn have come to mean to me since I met them some years back, after the death of their SEAL Team 6 son, Aaron. Gosh, I have come to know—I never met him while he was alive, but I have come to know him and feel like I knew him as a friend and as one of his admirers, vicariously, through his parents, Billy and Karen.

When I heard the general's name come back up as one of those being considered, I thought, oh, please, surely not, because Billy and Karen made clear, you know, as family members were finding out what happened there in Afghanistan that took the most SEAL team lives we had ever had, they went onto a Chinook that should not have carried our SEAL team members. They went onto this Chinook and, supposedly, going on a mission, and yet because of the rules laid down by President Obama and his administration, they had to make sure that the Afghans knew exactly what was going to occur, where they were going, what they were going to do.

Even knowing that after Vice President Joe Biden's gaffe, where he released classified information, that it was the SEALs who took out Osama bin Laden, it wasn't supposed to come out. It was another gaffe. But immediately, Bill and Karen said, after Biden outed the SEALs and it came out it was SEAL Team 6, they got a call from Aaron saying: Hey, you need to get off social media. The radical Islamists are going to be looking for us, for our family members.

So this administration put big targets on SEAL Team 6 by disclosing classified information that ultimately led to their deaths, and it put targets on family members of SEAL Team 6. I know they didn't mean to do it. I know it wasn't intentional. They just didn't realize how serious things were.

I know they must not have realized, or at least President Obama must not have realized, how serious it was when I watched the video of the gentleman that was called his body man, was with him through so many days, and he was answering questions at a university in California. It has been some years back that I watched. But he was asked, in effect, what was it like being with President Obama when he went into the room where they were watching SEAL Team 6 go after Osama bin Laden. He basically said: Oh, we didn't stay in there long. The President looked in but said, "I'm not watching this," and they

went and played cards, several hands of cards, while the SEAL Team 6 was putting their lives on the line for their country.

So if that is your way of thinking, then it is understandable that you wouldn't appreciate the dangers in which you put SEAL Team 6 when you put them as the people who went after Osama bin Laden. But they knew, and the chatter was clear, and it was loud. They wanted to take casualties and get a price back with lives of SEAL Team 6 members.

The mission that they were on should have ended right then, when the Afghan commander came up. They knew where they were going. He comes up and pulls off their elite soldiers, off the Chinook helicopter, and replaced them with people whose names were not on the manifest. Well, under the rules, that should have ended the task, should have ended the operation right there. They were told to go on, so they went—I have seen the transcript of testimony, statements—by gunship, C-130 gunship in the area. They had all kinds of imaging.

And this isn't classified because this was on the DVD that was given to the family members. They were later asked if they would give it back. They didn't realize quite how much information they had put. Yeah, they sure didn't because the family members, like the Vaughns, watched it, read it, found out what was on it.

We had a C-130 gunship, and I—my 4 years on Active Duty in the Army, I was never in combat. I think we should have gone into combat in Iran when an act of war occurred and our embassy was attacked. But that was Commander-in-Chief Carter's call, and he decided not to send anybody. I think if he had responded within 48 hours and said, "You either release our hostages, or we are sending our United States military, and you better not hurt them or there will be a powerful price paid by you and your country," I think they would have released them. I think that is why, probably—I mean, I was watching closely from Fort Benning. All of us were watching the news. Were any of us going to be sent?

The Ayatollah had a spokesman. I have not seen anything about it since I watched back in those days, '79, but I recall him. It was very interesting. For a few days, he kept distinguishing that it was the students that attacked the U.S. Embassy. It was the students that had the hostages.

I said to some of my Army friends at Fort Benning: I think he is afraid Carter's going to send our military, and he is using the students as a back door for him. So if Carter shows a backbone and says, "You either release our hostages or we are sending—you are going to feel the full vengeance of the United States military," they had a back door. It gave the Ayatollah an opportunity to save face by saying: You don't have to do it. We have negotiated with the students. Here are your

hostages back. You don't have to invade Iran and take out our administration. See, we are your friend. We helped you out.

But after a few days, I am not sure exactly what it was, but after a few days, it was clear, I think, to the Iranian leaders that this President is not going to do anything. He is just going to ask us to let their people go, and so we don't have to worry. They began to say "we have the hostages" because they knew Carter wasn't going to do anything.

I still believe, based on what I learned at Fort Benning, that if President Carter had allowed all the helicopters to go that I was told were originally requested, then there would not have been one chopper—they had to have six to be able to make it the 500 miles into the staging area there in Iran. As has come out publicly, they all knew, if we don't get six choppers out of the—eight was all the Carter administration would allow to go. They should have sent 12 because they expected to have a 50 percent loss, turbine engines going across sand like that 500 miles. They knew they had to have six or the mission was an automatic abort.

As we know, when only five got there and it was clear there was not another one coming, then it was aborted. As I understand, the investigation indicated the helicopter pilot, as sand swirled around his chopper, must have gotten vertigo and not relied on his instruments. The helicopter tilted. The blade went through the C-130, and everybody on the chopper and the C-130 was killed.

□ 1915

But, once again, we were embarrassed because we didn't have a Commander in Chief that was totally committed to doing what it took to get our hostages out. Again, I will always believe, if he had shown a backbone within 48 hours of our embassy being attacked and our hostages being taken, there would be thousands of American military lives still in being today.

So having witnessed firsthand lessons of poor decisions by Commanders in Chief, having seen the data, the statistics of dead American military in Afghanistan, four times more under Commander Obama than under Commander Bush in approximately near the same amount of time, we haven't learned the lessons of the past very well.

I feel absolutely confident that the President is going to learn his lessons. He has made a couple of mistakes. And certainly I agree, you can't have a National Security Adviser that is not completely honest with the Vice President and the President; you just can't. You have to be able to totally trust him. That has been a problem in our intelligence community. They were leaking and undermining President Bush, and now it is happening again to President Trump.

So as I was talking about SEAL Team Six, these devastated families

that had lost the greatest military members that we could have lost at that point, their every life is just priceless, invaluable. But there was so much money spent in training up these SEAL teams. It is an investment. You need to make sure they have the right equipment, that you don't have Afghans pulled off that are the best fighting members that Afghanistan has, and you put what they considered expendable Afghanistan soldiers on with our elite SEAL Team Six, especially when you know there are targets on their backs.

But when the families met General Harward, they said they were just so crushed, they were so devastated, and they found out that this AC-130 gunship, that there were opportunities to take out this patrol, this team, that shot down the Chinook and our SEAL team members. And there were other precious American lives on that helicopter in addition to the SEAL Team Six members, and they should not be shorted in when we owe them and their memories.

But they asked if they had an opportunity to take these guys out. And the crew said they did. They had the thermal imaging. They could see these guys moving like military. They could see them moving up to the high point and getting ready to fire. They asked for permission to take them out, and they were denied permission to take them out. They watched them fire over and over at the helicopters with the rocket-propelled grenades apparently of some kind, and they missed with the first one. As I understand it, they were still not allowed to shoot them down, take out the Afghan rebels. They fired again, and they fired again. And the second and third took out our precious American military members along with those precious Afghan lives who should never have been on that helicopter to begin with.

Then they watched them dismantle their equipment and start to climb down. They asked permission to take them out, it is my understanding, and, once again, they were told there may be civilians in the area, so, no, do not fire; and they watched them fade back into the population of Afghanistan after killing so many of our SEAL Team Six and others on the helicopter.

They asked the general who is now apparently going to be our National Security Adviser: Why didn't you take out these people, these Afghan radical Islamists? Why didn't you take them out before they took out our military members, our SEAL Team Six? Why?

His statement, from their memory, as related to me, was, in essence: Because we were trying to win hearts and minds.

Our National Security Adviser is going to be more interested in—or at least he has in the past—apparently has been more interested in winning hearts and minds of people that hate our guts than he is of protecting the most precious assets the United States of America has: American lives.

We haven't won any hearts and minds by allowing SEAL Team Six—so many of those members on that Chinook—to be killed. We haven't. That strategy didn't work.

I am sorry. I want to be supportive. I was excited President Trump won, but when I know how this man, who I understand today has now been named to be the new National Security Adviser, was given the task of encouraging and being empathetic to the family members who lost those precious American family members in that Chinook that should never have been shot down, it should never have been allowed to take off, and the best he could do is say: Sorry, they had to die because we were trying to win hearts and minds instead of win the war.

I hope that his mentality has changed. I hope he will not be willing to expend the best trained, the best and brightest military members we have, as he tries to win hearts and minds instead of trying to win a battle and win the war; but I guess time will tell.

Mr. Speaker, I want to finish by saluting all those brave Americans that have defended freedom, that have fought for America, and who have responded in a voluntary military since 1979 and given their lives at the hands of radical Islamists. I hope and pray this President will pick people from here who will have the same feelings about precious American lives.

I know Donald Trump does, and I think he will be a good President. I think he blew it on this call, but time will tell.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

#### INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 30 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I want to welcome my colleague, Congressman JOE CROWLEY, the chair of the Democratic Caucus who is joining us this evening as well. I know how very busy he is, and I appreciate it.

As author of the legislation that created our Nation's World War II Memorial here in Washington, I felt obligated and actually compelled to come to this well tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the Trump administration's hollow January 27 statement commemorating International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT TRUMP ON INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY—JANUARY 27, 2017

"It is with a heavy heart and somber mind that we remember and honor the victims, survivors, heroes of the Holocaust. It is impossible to fully fathom the depravity and horror inflicted on innocent people by Nazi terror.

"Yet, we know that in the darkest hours of humanity, light shines the brightest. As we

remember those who died, we are deeply grateful to those who risked their lives to save the innocent.

"In the name of the perished, I pledge to do everything in my power throughout my Presidency, and my life, to ensure that the forces of evil never again defeat the powers of good. Together, we will make love and tolerance prevalent throughout the world."

Ms. KAPTUR. Astoundingly, the White House statement made no reference to the 6 million Jews that perished in the Holocaust. There was no mention of anti-Semitism nor a reference to Israel, as has been customary in prior statements issued by our past Presidents.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a statement by President George Bush in 2008.

STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF COMMEMORATION IN MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST—JANUARY 27, 2008

On the third International Day of Commemoration, we remember and mourn the victims of the Holocaust.

I was deeply moved by my recent visit to Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust museum. Sixty-three years after the liberation of Auschwitz, we must continue to educate ourselves about the lessons of the Holocaust and honor those whose lives were taken as a result of a totalitarian ideology that embraced a national policy of violent hatred, bigotry, and extermination. It is also our responsibility to honor the survivors and those courageous souls who refused to be bystanders and instead risked their own lives to try to save the Nazis' intended victims.

Remembering the victims, heroes, and lessons of the Holocaust remains important today. We must continue to condemn the resurgence of anti-Semitism, that same virulent intolerance that led to the Holocaust, and we must combat bigotry and hatred in all forms in America and abroad. Today provides a sobering reminder that evil exists and a call that when we find evil, we must resist it.

May God bless the memory of the victims of the Holocaust, and may we never forget.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I will also include in the RECORD a statement by President Barack Obama from 2015 showing what the White House said about Holocaust Remembrance Day.

STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT OBAMA ON INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY AND THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIBERATION OF AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU—2015

On the tenth International Holocaust Remembrance Day and the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the American people pay tribute to the six million Jews and millions of others murdered by the Nazi regime. We also honor those who survived the Shoah, while recognizing the scars and burdens that many have carried ever since.

Honoring the victims and survivors begins with our renewed recognition of the value and dignity of each person. It demands from us the courage to protect the persecuted and speak out against bigotry and hatred. The recent terrorist attacks in Paris serve as a painful reminder of our obligation to condemn and combat rising anti-Semitism in all its forms, including the denial or trivialization of the Holocaust.

This anniversary is an opportunity to reflect on the progress we have made confronting this terrible chapter in human history and on our continuing efforts to end

genocide. I have sent a Presidential delegation to join Polish President Komorowski, the Polish people, official delegations from scores of nations, and many survivors, at today's official commemoration in Poland.

As a founding member of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, the United States joins the Alliance's thirty other member nations and partners in reiterating its solemn responsibility to uphold the commitments of the 2000 Stockholm Declaration. We commemorate all of the victims of the Holocaust, pledging never to forget, and recalling the cautionary words of the author and survivor of Auschwitz Primo Levi, "It happened, therefore it can happen again. . . . It can happen anywhere." Today we come together and commit, to the millions of murdered souls and all survivors, that it must never happen again.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, let me be clear: between 1933 and 1945, 14 million unarmed men, women, and children were murdered in Eastern Europe. These bloodlands were where most of Europe's Jews lived and where Hitler's and Stalin's imperial plans overlapped. Of the 14 million human beings who were killed, at least 6 million were Jewish souls. Their carnage was the largest in human history.

Thus, the brevity of the Trump administration's statement was surprisingly and unusually short and general—only about 100 words. When the White House was asked about these glaring omissions, multiple officials in the new administration at the White House merely confirmed "the statement was no mistake."

The Trump White House statement chose not to explicitly acknowledge the deaths of 6 million Jews during the Holocaust. This is atypical of any former President of our country. Moreover, the Trump statement implies that the recognition of the death of Jews during the Holocaust would come at the exclusion of other groups. The tone of those remarks takes the reader in the direction of denying the suffering of the Jewish people.

For the President not to mention Jews is a terrible omen.

So let us go through some history. The term "holocaust," arising from World War II, has come to mean annihilation of Jewish persons. From 1933 to 1945, those Jewish souls who perished in Europe totaled at least 6 million human beings. Between 2.7 million and 3 million Jews were murdered in Nazi-run death camps. In the USSR, 1,340,000 Jewish deaths were ordered by Joseph Stalin. At least 1.5 million of the victims forcibly killed by Hitler and Stalin were children.

Cumulatively, this carnage represented about two-thirds of the 9 million Jews who had resided in Central Europe. By way of explanation, for the 8 million Christians and others who were also murdered, the term generally used to describe their carnage is martyrdom. As an example, in Poland, 3 million Catholic Christian Poles were martyred by Nazi and Soviet killing machines.

The Holocaust also included Stalin's mass executions and forced starvation